

**Amendment to the Specification:**

In the specification, please replace paragraph [0016] on page 3, lines 16-21, as follows:

[0016] To obtain the strength loss model 102, the rate of degradation of the tensile support for a given constant load is obtained empirically. In one embodiment, repeated bend cycles are applied to a plurality of sample tensile ~~supports~~ supports 50 until they break. This can be conducted using any known fatigue ~~machine~~ machine 60. From this information, it is possible to determine a statistical distribution of the number of bend cycles required to bend a given tensile support to failure for a known constant load.